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# West Heath Club Tournament 2004

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### **New West Heath Message Board**

Post your own tournament comments on the [West Heath message board by clicking here](#). You will need the ID and password supplied in the 2004 Newsletter (paper copy only - the information is not on the web site version).

The first time you wish to post a message you must supply your email ID, a password and your name.

## Tournament News and Gossip

### Saturday 24 July - Finals Day

- The spectators were treated to a wealth of glorious tennis with plenty of suspense, and the additional bonus of the deciding set of the mixed. With the exception of the Ladies' Singles, all finals went to 3 sets, and we had the completely new experience of the Men's Singles being decided on a third set tie break.

- There was standing room only in the spectators gallery. If you didn't have a handbag to reserve your place between matches you were likely to lose it!

- The umpires did a splendid job, but some of the baseline lines persons were observed to be reading or smoking at changes of end, while a certain Mr Marsh on one of the court 2 sidelines had to be cross examined on more than one crucial call before he would venture an opinion either way (see Men's Final match report).

- Before handing over the trophies to the winners Kevin Ryan reminded the crowd that this is the 30th year for Sultan as men's team captain. This is an amazing achievement and one for Sultan to be proud of. Our special thanks go to Sultan and his co-referee Jane Boyle for the smooth running of the tournament.



- The Finals Day tea was second to none. Thanks to all those who organised it and provided food.

How Elena keeps her figure when she eats that lot I will never know.

- The Finals Day Barbecue was well attended, and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. In fact Sultan had to throw everyone out at half past midnight or a select few might have carried on partying all night.



- The web site had a very good tournament too - around

350 visits over the two and a half weeks of the tournament, averaging about 20 visits per day, compared with around 10 visits per day last year and an average of about 4 visits per day for the preceding 6 months (including members, potential new members, Google and other search engines periodically re-indexing our site). Sultan and I believe that the up-to-date tournament information from a PC at home or work helps to maintain a level of interest and excitement that keeps us all enthusiastic and involved in the tournament, which is naturally the highlight of the club's year, supplementing the effects of West Heath uniques such as the final week's Gourmet Dinners.

- By contrast we have had only 2 postings on the new web site message board, though this was implemented rather late in the run up to the tournament, and is less accessible than I would wish, requiring knowledge of the ID and password just to read the messages. I was hoping to be able to use it for tournament enrolments, but we were too late for this.

- We all know about assertive ladies who book their partners very early for next year's mixed, but how about this one. Kevin Ryan was overheard saying to Elena Valarche that she was the most improved player at the club (as well as, by common consent having the best figure, the most shapely legs and the highest level of determination). He proposed that they should play together in the 2005 mixed and ventured that, with practise over the next 12 months, they might even prevail!

### Friday 23 July - Ladies Semi-final

- Considering the good turnout and level of spectator interest for the other weekday evening matches in the second week, the top ladies semi-final took place at a quiet club. It saw Rachael Gangji and Marie Woodthorpe take on Elena Valarche and Christine Thompson. In the first set Rachael and Marie were dominant, and easily won with a 6-1 score. In the second Elena and Christine played much better, and took it to a tie break, though their opponents

previously had 3 match points which they let slip by. Elena and Christine took the tie break to win the second set 7-6. In the third set Rachael and Marie were again dominant and raced ahead to a 5-1 lead. However, they were subsequently broken, reducing the lead to 5-2, but won through for a fine 6-1 6-7 6-3 victory.

#### **Thursday 22 July - Mens Semi-finals and Mixed Final**

- A warm welcome to Carol Jardine's aunt Judy and her (possibly mythical) nephew Murdo. Judy, Carol asked me to apologise to you that she had been unable to visit you at the weekend because she needed to play her tennis club tournament matches.



- The top semi-final in the mens singles was Mark Stapleton vs Jamie Darling. Both players played well and the match was very tight and competitive, and enjoyed by players and spectators. There were no service breaks at all in the first set, though Jamie had set point on Mark's serve (5-6, 30-40) but failed to convert. Then Jamie found himself 1-4 down early in the tie break, which Mark took 7-4. In the second set there were again no breaks of service until 4-all, but then Mark broke and held to close the match out 7-6 6-4.

- The bottom semi-final was between Cedric de la Chaise and Stan Fletcher.

Cedric has been working out regularly this year, presumably with a view to improving his tennis, and took a tight first set 7-6 on a tie break, during which he raised his level when it mattered. He managed to maintain this during the second set for a fine 7-6 6-1 victory.

**Wednesday 21 July - Ladies Semi-Finals** - A super dinner of fish pie and fruit brulee was prepared by Mary de Jong and Edward, and there were some good matches to watch.

- In the ladies singles Marjan Denis took on Jane Boyle. Marjan found Jane's leftie serve difficult to cope with and her sliced ground strokes were impossible to return. Jane took the first set 6-1. Both players said that Jane was playing really well, though Marjan also commented Jane got the luck of the bounces to go with it for a fine lead. In the second set Marjan dug in and tried to come to the net more, which gave Jane less margin. In particular the uneven bounces made it more difficult for Jane to hit her power passing shots, so she was forced to give Marjan a number of volleys. Marjan managed to take the set to a tie break and even the score with a narrow 7-5 victory in the tie break. In the third set Jane started to tire, and Marjan was able to take full advantage. By her own admission Marjan was also getting most of the benefit of bad bounces at this point, and took the third set 6-3 for a fine, but unexpected victory.

- Carol Jardine versus Christine Thompson ended with a victory for Christine.

Carol reports that Christine played brilliantly, but that Carol played defensively and was lucky to get a set. Christine plays Marjan Denis in the final on Saturday.

- Mark Stapleton arrived late for his mens semi, which meant he and Sultan Gangji had to start immediately. Mark never got going against strong opponents David McBride and Jamie Darling, so Sultan and Mark were always on the back foot and David and Jamie claimed their place in the final 6-4 6-4.

- It was a similar picture in the mixed for the Gangjis against Jane Boyle and Cedric de la Chaise. Rachael, in particular never got going, and Sultan was not really on form. It did not help that he called a ball out on match point that landed well in, and Jane and Cedric earned their place in the final with a fine performance and a 6-2 6-2 victory.

- In the other mixed semi Stan Fletcher and Marie Woodthorpe took on Mark and Ludmilla Stapleton. The match was very tight, but Mark had recovered from his slow start in the men's doubles and played well. The first set got to 4 all. In the second set Mark and Ludmilla were 5-2 up, but Stan and Marie immediately broke. Ludmilla toughed out Stan's power shots, and did not change when he hit her with one - the ungentlemanly cad! Mark and Ludmilla upset the odds by breaking one more time than the opponents in each set for a 6-4 6-4 victory.

**Sunday 18 July** - Another lucky day when the weather looked inclement, but turned out well enough to enable play on grass. There was a crowd of about 20 to watch the afternoon matches, and the occasional social game

- Sally Tornow and Jamie Darling took on Jane Boyle and Cedric de la Chaise. The first set went to Jane and Cedric 6-1, but the second was a harder fought affair. The set went with serve until 4 all. Sally was serving in the critical game and made a few errors to go 0-40 down, but then the game swung and she pulled it back to 30-40. Having noticed that Jane (leftie) missed her service return on the forehand ad court Sally wisely chose the same serve on the third break point. Jane's return was straight to Jamie at the net, but, having played solidly for the rest of the set, he missed the volley and it was all over.

- Stan Fletcher and Cedric de la Chaise always had the edge in their match against Andrew Brodie and Paul O'Flynn. Andrew was not playing as well as in the previous round, and the pundits around me reckoned he was a yard slower than normal, and, being short of match practise, was not familiar with the pace at which the balls were hit, so gave some easy balls to the favourites on the other side of the net. Paul played better, but could not achieve the consistency needed to make an impression on Stan and Cedric, but the underdogs won some fine points, and Paul commented afterwards that the 6-1 6-2 score was a moral triumph.

- Sandip Sen had assumed he was playing Huw Crompton on Monday, but the tournament organisers needed the next round match playing on Monday.

Originally Sandeep had been defaulted, and Huw put through on a walkover, but Sandip turned up on Sunday later afternoon, whereupon he was immediately seized on to play Stan Fletcher - and Huw was defaulted instead. Sandip lost 6-1 6-1, but must have had a fun match. Tomorrow evening's arranged match between Sandip and Huw will now become a friendly!

- Fareed Samad nearly didn't get to play in the singles tonight. The organisers were just getting ready to default him so that the baying centre court crowd could have another match for their evening's entertainment, and Paul O'Flynn vs Cedric de la Chaise would have fit the bill nicely. Paul had 19:00 in his diary for the match against Fareed, but Fareed had 19:30 and turned at that time with a bunch of supporters. So the planned match went ahead and proved to be a cracker - most enjoyable for the spectators, and the participants. Fareed took the first set on a tie break (7-6) and the second on 7-5. Congratulations to both for a fine display.

**Saturday 17 July** - It is disappointing that no-one has posted anything on the message board yet. I assume this is because no-one can remember where they put the April 2004 Newsletter.

- The day started poorly with a downpour around 10:00, but improved steadily thereafter. By mid-afternoon the grass was in use and quite a few matches got played.

- Charles Rubinstein played a number of good shots against Mark Stapleton, but Mark always had the capability of stepping it up when necessary for a 6-1 6-1 victory.

- Barnard Deliege continued his onward march with a 6-4 6-2 victory against Jeff Fine for a place in the quarter finals. But he now has to play Mark Stapleton (club champion), so the going gets rather tougher.

- Jamie Darling had a good competitive game against Kevin Ryan. Jamie's serve and volley game served him well on a court that was rarely bouncing true, and his sound volleying technique allowed him to come through. They both enjoyed it so much they had another set afterwards just to make it worthwhile.

- Liz Goodfellow had a Ladies doubles match on Friday night and had not been very fresh for her encounter with Carol Jardine. However, Carol is a slower starter, and Liz took the first set 6-1. Carol came back well to take the second by a similar margin, and all was set for a final set show down. With both players tiring, the final set turned into a tactical battle. Carol played some short shots which Liz just failed to get to, and Liz threw in the odd unforced error for good measure, to give victory to Carol by 6-4.

- Andrew Brodie and Paul O'Flynn continued their winning ways to beat Brian

Coffey and Jeff Fine 1-6 6-4 6-2. Andrew played much better than previously, and Paul is a strong competitor when roused (which he usually is), but it obviously took them a while to get going. However, they will not be able to afford this luxury if they have to play Cedric de la Chaise and Stand Fletcher in the semis.

- Vince Sudbery and Derek Councell put up a bit of a fight against Sultan Gangji and Mark Stapleton, getting to 40 on a number of games, but somehow they managed to avoid converting this on any occasion, losing rapidly 6-0 6-0. It was noticeable that Sultan was not very mobile in this match, but we do not know whether this was because his hip is giving trouble, or he felt a win would be secured even if he left a number of balls to Mark. Again, Charles Rubinstein played a number of good points, but Derek was a little less consistent, though neither fact probably affected the outcome much.

- Dudley Leigh put up a good fight against David McBride. David took the first set 6-1, but Dudley hung in to take the second set. However, the last set went to David 6-2. Dudley commented afterwards that David's explosive topspin shots on both wings were difficult to handle, and that he had managed to poke the ball back on a number of occasions, but that David had been able to put the ball away on the next shot.

- I have discovered the secret of Sultan's success, on the court, and will reveal this shortly.

**Friday 16 July**- I missed Jane Boyle and Sarah Jane Wilson vs Liz Goodfellow and Sue Ehr, but it must have been a ding dong battle because the score was 2-6 7-5 6-4.

**Tuesday 13 July** - a few matches played today. Thankfully the weather was a little better than it has been over the weekend.

- Sue Ehr beat Moira Duncan 6-2 6-2.

- Sultan Gangji beat Vince Sudbery 6-1 6-0.

- The West Heath message board is now fully operational, so you can post your own message or observations on the tournament to the web site.

**Monday 12 July** - only 2 matches played today.

- Mary de Jong got one game off Liz Goodfellow.

- Vince Sudbery and Aruna Gunasekera must have had a hard-fought game as the eventual score was 6-0 5-7 6-3 to Vince. It looks like Vince's experience and medium-paced consistency told over Aruna's pacey, but more error-prone game.

- Come on Madam Chairman. Yours are the only outstanding matches in the first round of the ladies singles and mixed!

**Sunday 11 July** - Yesterday's rain meant the grass was still wet so all play was on shale again.

- Andrew Brodie, having lost convincingly in the singles, was bolstered by his partner, Paul O'Flynn, who had just won the "BeBraun Ear Nose and Throat" tournament in Liverpool. They put on a good show to defeat Ahmet Ratib and Jason Maratos 6-3 6-0.

- Kevin Ryan and Ahmet Ratib decided discretion was the better part of valour, and abandoned any attempt at queuing for the shale, preferring to play at the Cumberland instead. With the home advantage, Kevin won 6-2 6-4.

- The Mixed was the scene of a number of cut-throat battles today. Firstly Cedric de la Chaise and Jane Boyle played more consistently than Elena Valarche and Charles Rubinstein to win 6-1 6-0. Though Elena and Charles won a few fine points, they were not consistent enough to convert them into games.

- The match between Liz Goodfellow and Jeff Hiday, and Sue Latimer and Paul Rubie was a real ding dong battle, which could have gone either way until the last two games. Sue and Paul were 3-2 in the final set with a break, but neither side could hold serve until Jeff finally managed it for 5-4 up, whereupon Liz and Jeff put on a final spurt to win 5-7 6-1 6-4.

- Carol Jardine and Jeff Fine played Sally Tornow and Jamie Darling as the last match on court 5. Apparently Jeff was the one with the hangover (according to Carol), but independent witnesses say that Jamie Darling had to resort to dinks and lobs to get the ball past Carol and Jeff. Sally and Jamie won 6-7 6-3 6-1.

Congratulations to the victors. "We wuz robbed," said the losers.

**Saturday 10 July** - Rain and hail washed out the grass, leaving only one shale court playable. At one point it hailed so much it started to look like Christmas (see picture right).

- Andrew Brodie got whitewashed by Bernard Deliege, playing on shale. Bernard joined the club specifically to play on our shale courts, so he must have been delighted with the weather, though no-one else was. The margin of victory means that Bernard must be a competitor to be watched. He has to play Jeff Fine next, then Mark Stapleton, so watch this space.


- Marjan Dennis and Carol Jardine beat Sally Tornow and Gill Green. I don't know the score for sure, but the losers were heard to complain that the match took a long time. This might have been due to Gillian's lobs....

**Tuesday 6 July** - This year's tournament has come around very quickly, and the arrival of Sultan's draw on the doorstep was somewhat of a surprise, but at least I had the evening spare anyway! I only hope the grass courts will stand the extra wear that they will now get over the next few weeks after the sad death of Pepe and the month's delay in finding a replacement.

- A number of last year's finalist have LTA inter-club ratings. Click [here](#) to find out more.



Singles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#) Doubles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#), [Mixed](#)  
[Order of Play](#), [Match Reports](#), [Biographies](#), [Gossip](#), [Rules](#)

		Men's Open Singles Holder : <a href="#">Cedric de la Chaise</a>				
Round 1 Sat 10 July	Round 2 Thu 15 July	Round 3 Mon 19 July	Semi-finals Thu 22 July	Final Sat 24 July	Winner	
	Mark Stapleton	Mark Stapleton 6-1 6-1	Mark Stapleton 6-3 6-4			
Paul Rubie	Charles Rubinstein 4-6 6-1 6-3					
Charles Rubinstein	Bernard Deliege 6-0 6-0	Bernard Deliege 6-4 6-2				
Bernard Deliege						
Andrew Brodie	Jeff Fine	Sultan Gangji 6-1 6-0	Jamie Darling 6-1 4-6 4-1 (retd)	<a href="#">Mark Stapleton</a> 7-6 6-4		
	Sultan Gangji					
Aruna Gunasekera	Vince Sudbery 6-0 5-7 6-3	Jamie Darling 6-2 6-4				
Vince Sudbery						
Kevin Ryan	Kevin Ryan 6-2 6-4	Fareed Samad 7-6 7-5	Cedric de la Chaise 6-0 6-1			
Ahmet Ratib						
	Jamie Darling	Cedric de la Chaise 6-2 6-2				
	Fareed Samad					
David Cohen	Paul O'Flynn	David McBride 6-1 5-7 6-2	Stan Fletcher 6-0 6-3	<a href="#">Cedric de la Chaise</a> 7-6 6-1		
Paul O'Flynn						
Brian Coffey	Brian Coffey w/o	Stan Fletcher				
Jeff Hiday						
	Cedric de la Chaise	Stan Fletcher				
	David McBride					
Dudley Leigh	Dudley Leigh 6-2 6-0					
Joshua Azouz						
Sandip Sen	Sandip Sen w/o					
Huw Crompton						

[Cedric de la Chaise](#)  
3-6 6-1 7-6<sup>7-3</sup>

[Match Report](#)




		6-1 6-1			
	Stan Fletcher				

Singles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#) Doubles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#), [Mixed](#)  
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Round 1 Sun 11 July		Round 2 Sat 17 July		Semi-final Wed 21 July	Final Sat 24 July	Winner
		Jane Boyle		Jane Boyle 6-3 7-5	<a href="#">Marjan Denis</a> 1-6 7-6 <sup>7-5</sup> 6-3	<a href="#">Marjan Denis</a> 6-1 6-3  <a href="#">Match Report</a>
Moir Duncan	Sue Ehr	Sue Ehr 6-2 6-2		Marjan Denis 6-3 6-1		
Sue Ehr		Elena Valarche		Carol Jardine 1-6 6-1 6-4		
Marjan Denis	Marjan Denis	Marjan Denis 6-1 6-0		Christine Thompson 6-1 3-6 6-2		
Jenny Dover		Liz Goodfellow 6-1 6-0		Christine Thompson 6-3 6-3		
Mary de Jong	Liz Goodfellow	Carol Jardine				
Liz Goodfellow		Sarah Jane Wilson				
Sally Tornow		<a href="#">Christine Thompson</a>				
Sarah Jane Wilson						



Singles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#) Doubles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#), [Mixed](#)  
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Men's Open Doubles Holders : <a href="#">Cedric de la Chaise</a> & <a href="#">Stan Fletcher</a>				
Round 1 Sun 11 July	Round 2 Sun 18 July	Semi-final Wed 21 July	Final Sat 24 July	Winner
	Cedric de la Chaise Stan Fletcher	Cedric de la Chaise Stan Fletcher 6-0 6-2	<a href="#">Cedric de la Chaise</a> <a href="#">Stan Fletcher</a> 6-1 6-2	<a href="#">Cedric de la Chaise</a> <a href="#">Stan Fletcher</a> 6-4 3-6 6-1  <a href="#">Match Report</a>
Dudley Leigh Joshua Leigh	Charles Rubinstein Aruna Gunasekera 6-1 6-1			
Charles Rubinstein Aruna Gunasekera				
Andrew Brodie Paul O'Flynn	Andrew Brodie Paul O'Flynn 6-3 6-0	Andrew Brodie Paul O'Flynn 1-6 6-4 6-2		
Ahmet Ratib Jason Maratos				
	Brian Coffey Jeff Fine			
	Jeff Hiday Huw Crompton	Jamie Darling David McBride 6-0 6-1	Jamie Darling David McBride 6-4 6-4	
	Jamie Darling David McBride			
	Vince Sudbery Derek Councill	Sultan Gangji Mark Stapleton 6-0 6-0		
	Sultan Gangji Mark Stapleton			

Singles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#) Doubles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#), [Mixed](#)  
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Round 1 Sun 11 July		Semi-final Tue 20 July	Final Sat 24 July	Winner
Rachael Gangji Marie Woodthorpe		Rachael Gangji Marie Woodthorpe w/o	<a href="#">Rachael Gangji</a> Marie Woodthorpe 6-1 7-6 6-3	<a href="#">Rachael Gangji</a> Marie Woodthorpe 7-5 4-6 6-3  <a href="#">Match Report</a>
Jenny Dover Joan Barnes				
Chris Thompson Elena Valarche		Chris Thompson Elena Valarche 6-3 3-6 6-1		
Moirra Duncan Mary de Jong				
Marjan Denis Carol Jardine		Marjan Denis Carol Jardine 6-1 6-4	<a href="#">Marjan Denis</a> Carol Jardine 6-4 4-6 6-4	
Sally Tornow Gillian Green				
Liz Goodfellow Sue Ehr		Jane Boyle Sarah Jane Wilson 2-6 7-5 6-4		
Jane Boyle Sarah Jane Wilson				



Ladies' Open Doubles  
Holders : [Marie Woodthorpe](#) &  
[Rachael Gangji](#)

Singles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#) Doubles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#), [Mixed](#)  
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		Open Mixed Doubles Holders : <a href="#">Mark &amp; Ludmilla Stapleton</a>		
Round 1 Sun 11 July	Round 2 Sun 18 July	Semi-final Tue 20 July	Final Thu 22 July	Winner
	Stan Fletcher Marie Woodthorpe	Stan Fletcher Marie Woodthorpe 6-2 6-1	<a href="#">Mark Stapleton</a> <a href="#">Ludmilla Stapleton</a> 6-4 6-4	<a href="#">Mark Stapleton</a> <a href="#">Ludmilla Stapleton</a> 3-6 6-4 6-3  <a href="#">Match Report</a>
Sue Ehr Vince Sudbery	Christine Thompson Brian Coffey 6-3 6-2			
Christine Thompson Brian Coffey				
Mark Stapleton Ludmilla Stapleton	Mark Stapleton Ludmilla Stapleton 6-1 6-1	Mark Stapleton Ludmilla Stapleton 6-3 6-2		
Jenny Councill Derek Councill				
Marjan Denis Paul O'Flynn	Marjan Denis Paul O'Flynn 6-2 6-1			
Martin Raybould Moira Duncan		Cedric de la Chaise Jane Boyle 6-1 6-4	<a href="#">Cedric de la Chaise</a> <a href="#">Jane Boyle</a> 6-2 6-2	
Jamie Darling Sally Tornow	Jamie Darling Sally Tornow 6-7 6-3 6-1			
Jeff Fine Carol Jardine				
Charles Rubinstein Elena Valarche	Cedric de la Chaise Jane Boyle 6-1 6-0			
Cedric de la Chaise Jane Boyle		Rachael Gangji Sultan Gangji w/o		
Jeff Hiday Liz Goodfellow	Jeff Hiday Liz Goodfellow 5-7 6-2 6-4			
Sue Lattimer Paul Rubie				
	Rachael Gangji Sultan Gangji			

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## Match Reports

### Men's Singles Final

In the [Men's Singles final](#), [Mark Stapleton](#), the defending champion, took on [Cedric de la Chaise](#). The first set went with serve until Cedric was serving at 3-4. At 30-all Cedric got a bad bounce from the grass court and missed, but saved that break point. Mark earned another break point with an accurate shot to the side line.

Cedric missed his first serve, and served short on the second. Mark's superb return was to within 6 inches of the base line and Cedric netted. Mark held to close out the first set 6-3. Mark said later that the set had gone almost perfectly according to his game plan.

At times one felt the lines persons were perhaps not taking their duties as seriously as they might. Jamie Darling was reading a novel at every change of end. Paul Rubie was smoking. Peter Marsh was not very forthcoming with his side line calls, and had to be queried by the umpire on more than one occasion before he would admit that the ball was out, which resulted in loud applause every time he made a call without prompting.

In the second set Mark then let Cedric back into the match by losing his first two service games, so Cedric leapt into a 5-0 lead. Mark then held for the first time in the set to ensure he was serving first in the next. The main problem appeared to be that Mark was pushing volleys back very short instead of putting most to the corners as he had done so well in the first set, and Cedric is quick and fit enough to be able to anticipate this and come in quickly for either an easy pass or at least a 50-50 exchange.



The final set turned into a real thriller. At 30-all on Mark's serve Cedric put up a defensive lob, for which Mark did not quite get the footwork right and put just long, and on the break point Cedric cashed in. Cedric held serve for a 2-0 lead. On his second service game Mark lost out on two exchanges at the net and double faulted, giving Cedric a 3-0 lead. At this point, with a double break to Cedric we thought it was all over. But in the next game Mark put more pressure on and secured two break points at 15-40.

The first he could not convert, but the second Mark pulled the deficit back to a single break. On Mark's next service game Cedric forced a deuce, but Mark now held his nerve. At 3-2 on Cedric's serve Mark again applied the pressure and earned 3 break points with a good approach from which Cedric's lob was long. So back to 3-3, then the rest of the next 6 games went with serve for 6-all.

5 years ago the tournament referee (Sultan Gangji) changed the format of the final to allow a tie break in the final set, but this year was the first ever where this was required. Mark kicked off for 1-0. At 1-1 on Cedric's serve Mark had a chance for an easy volley winner which he netted, and at 1-2 on Mark's serve Cedric hit a beautiful pass to earn the mini break for 3-1. At this point there was a disputed line call on a close ball called out. At 4-2, on Cedric's serve he was forced to hit a lob, which Mark hit wide for 5-2 to Cedric. Mark won the first of his next two serves, but lost the second, giving 6-3 and 3 match points to Cedric. On the first of these Mark hit a good approach of Cedric's serve and came in, but slipped when going for the volley and it was all over, Cedric winning 3-6 6-1 7-6<sup>7-3</sup>.

### Ladies' Singles Final

The [Ladies' Final](#) was contested by [Christine Thompson](#) and [Marjan Denis](#), neither of whom had appeared in a final before. This is Christine's first year at the club. By contrast to the men's final, it was a more one-sided match. In the first set, at 1-2 on Christine's serve, Marjan broke her, and broke her again at 1-4, holding her own serve for 6-1 to Marjan. Marjan was playing well, but although Christine has a very heavy serve, she was not able to capitalise because of a lack of consistency, and made a number of service errors and unforced errors in the open play.



The second set started more evenly, but at 2-2 Marjan broke and held to gain a 4-2 advantage. Christine won here next service game, but Marjan again held for 5-3 and proceeded to break Christine yet again to close out the match 6-1 6-3.

## Men's Doubles Final

This year's [Mens Doubles](#) final saw newcomers Jamie Darling and David McBride take on the new pairing of [Stan Fletcher](#) and [Cedric de la Chaise](#), the number one seeds. Cedric won the doubles crown last year in partnership with Russell Huxtable.



In the first game of the match Jamie was broken, and everyone held serve until the first set was won 6-4 by Stan and Cedric.

The second set similarly saw Cedric broken in his first service game, everyone else holding for a 6-3 set to the challengers.

The third set saw more fireworks. Cedric held, then there was a fiercely contested game on David's serve with more than one

deuce. On the last of these David double faulted and on the break point dumped a half volley into the net to concede the break. The next game was on Stan's serve, which is always a bit of a hit or miss affair - he tends to use the first serve as an aiming exercise for the similarly heavy second serve, which either goes in or out! At 40-30, serving to Jamie, Cedric called (out loud) for a serve on Jamie's backhand.

Stan duly obliged, whereupon Cedric crossed, but Jamie coolly put the ball down the line into the open court for deuce. David went for his next return and earned break point, but Stan toughed it out for a hold. Jamie was in trouble at 0-40 on the next game, and though David made a fine volley on the next point the number one seeds converted to allow Stan later to serve for the set at 5-1.

At 30-all David's return was just long, and Jamie put his last return out to give victory to the first seeds 6-4 3-6 6-1.



By common consent, the best player on the court was Jamie Darling, who is also regarded as the best volleyer in the club.

## Ladies Doubles Final

In the [Ladies' Doubles](#) final [Marjan Denis](#) (new Singles champion) and Carol Jardine challenged [Rachael Gangji](#) and Marie Woodthorpe. Rachael and Marie broke early but were hauled back to 4-all, then the score reached 5-5 on serve before Rachael and Marie broke again and held to take the first set 7-5.

In the second set matters were similarly even until 5-5, but the set was taken on a single service break by Marjan and Carol 7-5 (I believe).

The third set saw Rachael and Marie in control, and they broke early to allow them to put pressure on Carol's serve at 3-5, whereupon they broke her to gain the title 7-5 5-7(?) 6-3..

## Mixed Doubles Final

On Thursday, the [Mixed Doubles](#) final was a close affair involving [Jane Boyle](#) and [Cedric de la Chaise](#) against [Mark and Ludmilla Stapleton](#). Both men were broken at the start of the match, but then Jane held and Millie was broken. The score got to 5-3 with Cedric serving and he closed out the set for 6-3.

In the second set Cedric lost his serve early on, but the local tennis analysts, Sultan and I, missed it. Thereafter Sultan kept whispering throughout the set that Jane and Cedric were about to close out the match (as it was time for dinner). However, Ludmilla, in particular, played some brave (some might say foolhardy) tennis taking the net against Cedric's power ground strokes. Mark also stepped up his game, cutting out some of the errors, and though Milly was later broken, Mark held and Cedric came under intense pressure on his serve. The first two points went to him, but the Stapletons pulled it back to 30-all, and went on to take the game and the second set 6-4. By this time it really was dinner time at 21:15, and there was no way there would be light to complete a third set, so the conclusion was postponed until Finals Day on Saturday.

The match resumed after the finish of the mens doubles on Finals Day, watched by a crowd who were fully stuffed with cake and sandwiches. By this time, Cedric was playing his 7th set of the afternoon, of which this was the 4th against Mark. Marked kicked off to hold serve, but Cedric was immediately broken, while Milly and Jane held for 3-1 to Milly and Mark. Everyone held serve on the next round, leaving Mark to serve for the match. At 30 all, Milly put a beautiful angled volley just out of reach of the lunging Cedric, and Mark produced an error from the opponents on the next point to take the match 3-6 6-4 6-3



## **Player Biographies**

### **Cedric de la Chaise**

Strong right-hander who won the men's doubles last year and has been working hard on his fitness levels all year, which reaped benefits for him this year as he appeared in all three finals, and came close to winning the triple. He is now the deserved singles and doubles champion, and we look forward to more ding-dong battles between him and Mark Stapleton over the years to come.

### **Mark Stapleton**

Strong right-hander who is now back playing for West Heath in the Middlesex league after a season on loan to David Lloyd to gain experience of the Intermediate division. Mark's domination of the men's singles resumed in 2001 after a brief interruption by Miles Raybould in 2000. Mark is married to the delectable Ludmilla whom he partners in the mixed doubles. Last year, Mark's almost continuous domination of the singles title was threatened by Stan Fletcher, the number 2 seed this year and last, but he put on a good display in 2003 to hold on to his crown.

### **Stan Fletcher**

Having failed to wrest Mark Stapleton's crown away from him last year, Stan is hoping for a better day in his matches this year. Will he get it? You will probably find out on Finals' Day.

### **Sultan Gangji**

While Sultan's eye is as good as ever, he does not seem quite as mobile on court as he used to be. We will have to see what happens when he comes up against some stiff opposition.

### **Russell Huxtable**

Russell partnered with Cedric de la Chaise to win the Men's Doubles last year, but has since emigrated to France where his tennis talents are probably better appreciated. We wish him the best of luck.

### **Kevin Ryan**

In the past Kevin has been a good doubles player and steady under pressure although his singles record does not match his doubles ranking. We have no form for him this year, as yet, but his frequent trips to his new apartment at the Val de Lobo tennis resort are either a sign of his determination to train properly for this year's tournament or represent a more laid back attitude to life in general and tennis in particular. See what you think as the draw progresses.

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### **Marjan Denis**

Marjan currently plays her league tennis for Brampton. After a solid tournament last year, Marjan is this season's surprise semi-final singles winner. Will she beat Christine Thompson in the final? Come and see.

### **Christine Thompson**

Christine has been a stalwart of the West Heath first ladies league team during this season, and played well to defeat Carol Jardine in her ladies semi. Come to finals day and see how she does against Marjan Denis.

## Jane Boyle

Jane holds more West Heath ladies singles titles than any other West Heath member, past or present (1974, 1976 - 1981, 2000 and 2001), a record of which she is justifiably proud. There was a noteworthy party for Jane in 2003, but, with the departure of Sofie Beaus, Jane believes she is in with a chance in 2004. Will the 2004 newcomers threaten her chances? Jane's form in the Cumberland tournament so far has been very good and she is looking forward to the challenge at West Heath.

## Rachael Gangji

Rachael is an infrequent visitor to the club nowadays, but puts in an appearance in the tournament. She had not yet shown the form of previous years, but appears to have put on a good show in her Ladies semi to appear in one final this year.

## Sofie Beaus

Sofie Beaus (now Sofie Sullivan) took all honours last year, but has emigrated to Australia with her husband Philip, so will not be defending her title in 2004.

## Janet O'Connor

Janet is reported to have done well in the Cumberland tournament this year. However, she will be on holiday at the critical time and will be unable to contest any events in this year's tournament.

## The LTA Official View

The LTA have an [inter-club rating](#) scheme for players who register. You get an initial rating, then ratings are updated regularly based on your tournament results. The ratings of our club finalists are on the LTA web site (click on the underlined link above) and can be years out of date (mine is). The actual absolute ratings have now changed though the relative ratings are still valid. Here are the rated players from the latter stages of the club tournament. The lower the rating the better the player:-

- 5.1 Stan Fletcher
- 6.1 Mark Stapleton (For some reason he is Essex, not Middlesex!)
- 6.2 Jane Boyle, Sultan Gangji
- 7.1 Jamie Darling
- 7.2 Carol Jardine, Rachael Gangji, Cedric de la Chaise (and yours truly)
- 8.1 Marjan Denis

**Singles:** [Men's](#), [Ladies](#) **Doubles:** [Men's](#), [Ladies](#), [Mixed](#)  
[Order of Play](#), [Match Reports](#), [Biographies](#), [Gossip](#), [Rules](#)

## Rules

1. The tournament officially begins on Thursday 8 July and the Finals will be played on Saturday 24 July. If rain prevents play the finals will be played on Sunday 25 July. The draw will be in the club house and on the web site on Wednesday 7 July to allow competitors to arrange matches during the week. First round matches must be played before or on Saturday 10 July.
2. A chart of available court times is drawn up and competitors are asked to book the courts they intend to play on.
3. The player(s) whose name(s) appear at the top of the fixture are responsible for challenging their opponent(s).
4. The Tournament is to be played on all the courts, apart from the Semi-Finals which will be played on grass, unless the weather does not permit. In the event of disagreement between the opponents on the surface to be chosen, this will be decided by the spin of a racquet.
5. New balls will be available for the Finals.
6. All rounds are to be played within the scheduled times indicated at the top of each draw sheet to enable smooth flow. **Extensions will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and with permission of the joint referees.**
7. All matches will be best of 3 sets. The tie-break will operate at 6-6 in **ALL** sets. The rules of the tie-break are displayed.
8. All matches must be continuous and appeal for bad light will be considered at 9 p.m.
9. Please give your entry fee to Sultan Gangji, Jane Boyle or Marjan Denis. The fee is £3 for one event or £5 for two or more.
10. Competitors are expected to volunteer to be lines persons on Finals Day.
11. The Joint Referees are Sultan Gangji and Jane Boyle, whose decisions will remain final

Sultan Gangji and Jane Boyle

## Tournament Picture Gallery

Currently empty - wait until our reporter has a chance to see some action this weekend!!!

Singles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#)    Doubles: [Men's](#), [Ladies](#), [Mixed](#)  
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